

Large Events Report



Large Events Report

Sgt. Nicole Chapdelaine
DEOPS – PSCT
August 2012
Amended September 2012

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
Large Events Report	5
Pre-Event	5
Post Event	6
Future Events	8
Stakeholder Consultation	8
Research and Findings.....	9
Recommendations	11
Attachments	
• Attachment 1: Elements Music Festival Summary	
• Attachment 2: Electronic Dance Music Events Summary Report	

Executive Summary

On February 08, 2012, the Public Safety Compliance Team (PSCT) received information that Boodang Canada was hosting a two day, 12 hour a day, Electronic Music Festival (EMF), at the Northlands Expo. It was projected that up to 24,000 patrons would attend the event.

There were immediate concerns relative to the significant impact the event would have on many civic and emergency services. The Edmonton Police Service (EPS) presented these concerns on March 21, 2012, to the City of Edmonton's Executive Committee. Upon hearing the EPS presentation, Mayor Mandel made the following inquiry assigned to the EPS and City of Edmonton's Sustainable Development Branch.

"That Administration consider a Licence review for large events that addresses the following:

-the recommendations outlined in the Edmonton Police Service presentation

-increased police presence to the satisfaction of the Edmonton Police Service, paid by the event organizer

-proper Emergency Medical Services paid by the event organizer

and return to Executive Committee in October 2012, with a report outlining a strategy to deal with after hours dance events, with associated costs to be paid by the event organizer".

There appeared to be no formalized City oversight for the EMF and it was unclear if the City had the authority to prevent the event from occurring. To support the needs of the event, from a public safety perspective, the EPS developed a Standard Operational Plan (SOP). The Civic Events Office was identified as the City area capable of leading and working with the various City departments and external agencies to develop service plans in support of this event.

The EMF event hosted a total of 8,312 patrons on April 27th and 8,254 on April 28th, for a two day total of 16,566. The atmosphere at the EMF went from anticipation and excitement on the first night, to rowdy and boisterous on the second night. There were 4 drug overdose related medical transports to area hospitals from the EMF the first night and 18 the second night. The report identifies a number of factors that may have contributed to this.

Stakeholder consultation with over forty people representing promoters, venues and regulators was completed in July 2012. The purpose of the consultation was to identify and discuss past experience (the EMF) and recommendations for future large events. A number of items were identified as best practices or factors to consider to properly plan, manage and police large events in the City of Edmonton.

During the consultation, there was little support from promoters and venues to add further regulations (municipal bylaws) around large events taking place within the City of Edmonton, in private or public venues. Current legislation (municipal, provincial and federal) allows regulatory agencies to utilize enforcement in a reactive manner.

Arising from the EMF experience, consultation with stakeholders and research conducted, are 11 best business practice recommendations. These recommendations will assist in clarifying roles and responsibilities related to the planning, managing and policing of events that impact civic and emergency services within the City of Edmonton.

If the City of Edmonton hosts future events that have known significant impacts on civic and emergency services, then timely, collaborative and transparent communication is critical. Corporate risk must also be considered when evaluating whether an event should take place. Most importantly, public safety should not be up for negotiation and should remain a civic priority and responsibility when such events are being considered.

Large Events Report

The intent of the report is to outline the current state of the planning, managing and policing for large events in the City of Edmonton and to propose recommendations for the future state of the planning, managing and policing large events in the City of Edmonton. It is not the intent of this report to speak specifically about the Elements Music Festival (EMF). In order to understand the reasoning and purpose behind this report, an overview of the EMF and the concerns that came forward in relation to the planning of the event is required.

Pre-Event

On April 27 and 28, 2012, Boodang Canada held the EMF at the Northlands Expo Centre. The event ran from 3:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. on April 27 and 3:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. on April 28. The event hosted a total of 8,312 patrons on April 27th and 8,254 on April 28th, for a two day total of 16,566. There were no existing bylaws that regulated the event; therefore, there were no requirements for the promoter or the venue to notify and/or get approval/support from the City, in order to host the event.

When the event was announced in February 2012, there were immediate concerns relative to the significant impact the event would have on many civic and emergency services. Along with a lack of understanding about the event in general, there appeared to be no formalized process in place to properly plan, manage and police an event such as this within a City supported venue. It was unclear who was ultimately responsible for the oversight of the civic and emergency service needs for the event. Additionally, it was unclear if the City had the authority to prevent the event from occurring.

With little time to prepare, the Edmonton Police Service (EPS), led by the Sergeant in charge of the Public Safety Compliance Team (PSCT), developed a Standard Operational Plan (SOP) for the EMF. The mission of the SOP was to support the needs of the event from a public safety perspective. In the course of developing the SOP it became readily apparent that the planning, managing and policing for this event required numerous other civic and emergency services to support the needs of public safety.

The Civic Events Office was identified by the EPS as being capable of leading the facilitation of various City departments and external agencies that could develop service plans in support of this event. This group included:

- Edmonton Police Service
- Edmonton Transit Service
- Community Standards (Complaints & Investigations/Parking Enforcement)
- Alberta Health Service
- Edmonton Fire Rescue Service
- Corporate Communications Branch (City and EPS)
- Office of Emergency Preparedness

- Public Safety Compliance Team
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police (multi-jurisdictional)
- Northlands

Throughout the process, Northlands worked collaboratively with all the involved agencies and stakeholder groups in an effort to support the public safety plan.

Post Event

Similar to the Frequency After Hour Event that took place in February 2012, at the Shaw Conference Centre, it is difficult at this time to determine if the EMF was a success or not. The higher number of regulatory personnel at the event allowed for the event to be better managed. Certain aspects of the plan, such as the high number of police, Northlands security and the addition of drug detection canine teams at the ingress worked well. This presence had a significant impact on reducing drugs being brought into the event through the main ingress point.

From a public safety perspective, the first night of the EMF went relatively well. There were 24 police incidents, 21 medical incidents and 4 transports to hospitals.

Unfortunately, there was a significant increase in incidents on the second night of the EMF. There were 54 police incidents, 31 medical incidents and 18 transports to hospital, 14 of which were drug related overdoses. The Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton (SACE) also received twenty-two reports of sexual assaults related to the EMF. At this time there are no further details available on these reports.

Behaviours displayed by the patrons on the second night were extremely different compared to the first night. The atmosphere went from anticipation and excitement on the first night, to rowdy and boisterous on the second night. The change in crowd dynamics and patron behaviours the second night was unexpected.

A number of factors may have contributed to this change:

- the anticipated high presence of police and security at the ingress
- the time it took to get a single alcoholic drink (over one hour) the first night
 - both of which contributed to patrons pre-loading with alcohol or drugs in their vehicles the second night
- entrances specifically dedicated to the promoter and DJs were not staffed by police or Northlands security and therefore allowed un-scrutinized access in and out of the venue
 - this arrangement was previously negotiated between Northlands, the promoter and the DJs
 - EPS recommended that police, drug detection canine teams and/or Northlands security be placed at these entrances, however, this request was not supported
 - EPS has since confirmed that drugs were brought in through these entrances
- the ability for patrons to identify ways to bring drugs into the venue undetected

- the ability for patrons to throw items over the fence surrounding the smoke pit area undetected
- a lack of timely communication between stakeholders pre-event
- time allowed to put an effective plan together.

Alberta Health Services (AHS) had a comprehensive plan for the anticipated medical events. It can be said, without a doubt, if AHS did not plan as they did, the likelihood of someone dying at the event from a drug overdose would have been extremely high, if not imminent. Over the two nights numerous patrons presented to AHS experiencing life threatening conditions. The doctors on site gave immediate life saving injections of valium to numerous patrons. In fact, the doctors were required to give so many valium injections the second night that they ran out of valium and had to make a request for more. Without question these doctors saved numerous lives at the event.

Patrons that ingested drugs at EMF and left prior to the drugs taking full effect were required to be transported by alternate means (e.g. friends, family or ambulance) to a medical facility. At the time of writing, one such patron is still in intensive care and will likely need acute medical care for the duration of their life.

AHS approached this event with a tiered level of medical response. The AHS response included the following:

- additional staff and doctors in emergency rooms at the major hospitals
- doctors and medical staff on site at the EMF for the duration of the event
- ambulances on site at the EMF to allow for immediate transport of the most critical
- the use of the Mass Casualty Incident Bus (a bus that can care for up to five critical patients on site)

This approach eliminated the potential for priority medical services, unrelated to EMF, to be attended to without delay. The health professionals working at EMF are owed a great amount of gratitude for how they responded to medical needs both nights.

Edmonton Transit Service (ETS) was also impacted by the EMF. Additional LRT cars as well as extended service until 3:30 am were required to support the needs of patrons coming to and leaving the event. A total of 7,660 patrons utilized the LRT both nights of the EMF. Ridership was higher than anticipated and was extremely helpful with the dispersal of patrons from the event.

Other civic departments and regulatory agencies in attendance at the EMF and impacted by the event were Fire Rescue Services (FRS), PSCT, Community Standards, Office of Emergency Preparedness (OEP), RCMP and Corporate Communications from the City and the EPS. Each department or agency formulated a plan to meet their perceived needs and to support the overarching public safety concerns. Although impact to these departments and agencies were minimal on both nights of the EMF, numerous resources were dedicated to the event as a proactive and precautionary measure due to the potential for incidents.

The planning for the EMF was rushed. There was not enough time to get a good understanding of the event and to create an effective plan for the EMF. Timely, transparent and collaborative communication between the promoters, Northlands, the City of Edmonton and emergency services would have created a better opportunity to effectively plan, manage and police the EMF. Additionally, the costs to ensure public safety could have been clearly identified at the outset and the promoters could have decided if they wished to proceed after learning the true costs they would incur.

Future Events

Stakeholder communication is key for public safety. If the City of Edmonton plans to host events in the future that have a similar impact on civic and emergency services, communication amongst all stakeholders is critical to the planning stage. The communication must be:

- Timely
- Collaborative
- Transparent

Most importantly, from a proactive perspective, involvement in the planning stage helps ensure potential public safety risks are identified and tactics developed to mitigate such risks.

Corporate risk must always be considered when evaluating whether the City of Edmonton should host any event. Financial, reputational and legal risk should be paramount. Should an event be deemed by the City as having too much risk, the City should not host/support the event. Furthermore, the City should have a mechanism to prevent such risk intolerant events from occurring.

Stakeholder Consultation

The Edmonton Police Service, in consultation with Sustainable Development and the Civic Events Office, conducted meetings with stakeholder groups who were identified as those who may be impacted by any recommendations related to this report.

Stakeholders included promoters, venues and regulatory agencies. The purpose of the consultation was to identify and discuss the current and potential future state for events that have a significant impact on civic and emergency services.

Some stakeholders chose not to attend the public consultation for the following reasons:

- they felt the discussions did not relate to them (e.g. AGLC felt the consultation process was at a municipal level and therefore did not feel they needed to attend)
- they felt they would not be impacted by the outcomes (e.g. bars that do not host large events)
- they were not involved in hosting or promoting large events (e.g. bars that do not host large events)
- did not attend for reasons that are not known

It should be noted that although some of the stakeholders chose not to attend, they appreciated the invitation to participate in consultation.

A total of five meetings were held with over 40 stakeholders (2 group sessions, 1 promoter session, 1 venue session and 1 regulatory session). After each meeting, session notes were sent out to all stakeholders. They were given an opportunity to review and provide feedback.

A facilitator was brought in to assist with the following needs:

- keeping the group working together to come up with the best possible recommendations
- keeping the discussions on track
- capturing and providing an overview of the discussion
- assist in assuring a fair and unbiased position

It was clear throughout the consultation that there was a recognized difference between events in private venues and events in public venues. It was noted that a majority of these events already have oversight.

Research and Findings

Where there was identified ambiguity was with events that appeared to not fit within anyone's mandate. It appeared there was no identified oversight for events that occur in City owned, operated and/or supported venues, such as:

- Shaw Conference Centre
- Northlands Expo Centre
- Rexall Place
- Commonwealth
- Telus Field

Events that typically take place in these venues significantly impact civic and emergency services.

In an effort to identify where the responsibility for the oversight of events, such as the EMF or events that take place in a City owned, operated and/or supported venues, may already exist or would best fit, a review of current responsibilities related to the Civic Events Management Team (CEMT), Civic Events Implementation Team (CEIT), OEP, EPS and the PSCT was completed.

The following documents were reviewed:

- CEMT - Terms of Reference (December 2001)
- CEIT - Terms of Reference (draft revisions November 2010)
- Civic Events Office website
(http://www.edmonton.ca/attractions_recreation/festivals_events/civic-events-office.aspx)
- Alberta Emergency Management Agency (AEMA) – Emergency Response Planning for Mass Gatherings

- Office of Emergency Preparedness website
(http://www.edmonton.ca/for_residents/emergency_services/emergency-preparedness.aspx)
- Major Event Management – Standard Operational Plan (EPS Policy Part 3 Introduction 4)
- PSCT Terms of Reference (June 2012)

The review identified the following roles and responsibilities:

- The CEMT is responsible for identifying and determining which events occurring in the City are of a higher risk or profile or of an unknown risk/profile and require a command presence
- The CEIT exists as a formalized working group to ensure a coordinated approach to event management, with improved communication and planning occurring between departments
- CEMT and CEIT are tasked with including events that are sponsored or hosted by the City of Edmonton Corporation as well as other external events
- CEIT is to establish a process to review events that were occurring in the City and to determine which required more formalized civic operations support
- CEIT is responsible for developing awareness of events within civic departments, reviewing event proposals, providing issue resolution and recommendations to CEMT
- CEMT and CEIT felt the coordination of and communication between civic services should be consistent and better organized for events of a significant nature that involve two or more departments/services
- The Civic Events Office is responsible for the oversight of public venues and events (i.e. Churchill Square, Centennial Plaza, gazebos, band shells, Heritage Amphitheatre, parks, River Valley, picnic sites, roads and sidewalks).
- The Alberta Emergency Management Agency (AEMA) and Office of Emergency Planning (OEP) document, *Emergency Response Planning for Mass Gatherings - A guide to assist event planners in the preparation for mass gathering events in the province of Alberta*.
- The Office of Emergency Preparedness is responsible for ensuring the City of Edmonton mitigates, is prepared for, can respond to and recover from all hazards including natural disasters, technological incidents and human caused incidents
- To ensure an effective and coordinated response to an event or disaster, the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) has been established, equipped and is ready to be activated. The operational model used in the EOC is the Incident Command System (ICS). ICS is the management system designed to provide support and resources to the incident site
- The EPS is responsible for planning the police response for major events defined in EPS policy or events that have come to the EPS' attention by way of the following:
 - another police agency entering EPS jurisdiction (e.g. RCMP Memorial)
 - CEMT
 - City Manager
 - director of OEP

- director or CEO of any other civic department (e.g. CEIT)
- The PSCT is responsible for the education, prevention, enforcement and oversight of private venues and events (i.e. bars, casinos, cultural centre's, hotels and private clubs)
- There is current municipal, provincial and federal legislation that exists to give regulatory agencies the authority to act on non-compliance. The following pieces of legislation are currently used by the PSCT in relation to non-compliance:
 - *Criminal Code*, R.S.C. 1985, c. C-46
 - *Safety Codes Act*, Regulation RSA 2000 S-1
 - *Alberta Fire Code*, 2006
 - *Gaming and Liquor Act*, (G-1 RSA 2000)
 - *Gaming and Liquor Regulation*, (143/1996)
 - *City of Edmonton Bylaws*
 - *Municipal Government Act*, s. 551(1)

The CEIT would be responsible for the planning, managing, coordination and oversight of civic events, including large events that take place within City owned, operated and/or supported venues. Other regulatory agencies would support the work of the CEIT, by providing a response plan specific to that agency's subject matter expertise. For example, the EPS would support the work of the CEIT by providing a policing plan. CEIT's collaboration with regulatory agencies when preparing for major civic events will ensure a systemic approach to public safety.

Recommendations

During the consultation, there was little support from promoters and venues to add further regulations (municipal bylaws) around large events taking place within the City of Edmonton, in private or public venues. The fear was that things will become too cumbersome and will detract businesses from coming to Edmonton to host events.

Current legislation (municipal, provincial and federal) allows regulatory agencies to utilize enforcement in a reactive manner. In an effort to better plan, manage, coordinate and police large events, it will be prudent for the City of Edmonton to explore additional proactive processes and/or regulations.

What was identified and strongly supported by all those in attendance was that there is a requirement for further clarity around the roles and responsibilities for civic and emergency services and what is expected from venues and promoters hosting events. All of the stakeholders involved in the consultation agreed that having a better understanding and increased involvement in the planning stages will allow for more effective deployments of resources for all involved agencies.

The recommendations will assist with the following:

- clarifying roles and responsibilities
- amendments to support the recommendations
- items that require further consultation or discussion

1. Civic Events Office becomes the lead oversight group with the planning and managing of events that impact two or more departments/services and that take place within City-owned, operated or supported venues, such as:
 - Shaw Conference Centre
 - Commonwealth Stadium
 - Northlands Expo Centre
 - Rexall Place
 - Telus Field
2. Civic Events Office, in consultation with the appropriate stakeholders, will develop and implement a process for the notification, planning, managing and policing of events that take place within their venues.
 - a. Within the implementation process the following topics need to be addressed:
 - Notification Process (How and who)
 - Civic and Emergency Service Impact
 - Public Safety
 - Risks
 - Cost Recovery
 - Economic Impact
 - City Reputation
 - Lead Time and Response Time
 - Enforcement
3. The Civic Events Implementation Team (CEIT) Terms of Reference be amended to clearly reflect recommendation 1, update language required to accurately define the roles and responsibilities of the CEIT. That the membership of the CEIT is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure its accuracy.
4. For events that fall within the CEIT mandate, the Civic Events Management Team (CEMT) is designated as the oversight group who has the authority to make recommendations, to the appropriate person or body capable of entering into an agreement/contract for such events, that the event is supported or not supported.
5. The CEMT Terms of Reference be amended to clearly reflect recommendation 4, update language required to accurately define the roles and responsibilities of the CEMT, and to update its membership. That the membership of the CEMT is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure its accuracy.
6. The Public Safety Compliance Team (PSCT) maintains responsibility of events that take place within a privately owned venue.
7. Sustainable Development – Licensing Branch explore the feasibility of creating a category and definition for “Promoters” which may have specific regulations or licensing requirements.

8. Sustainable Development – Licensing Branch explore the option of increasing the fine amount for persons who host events without a valid business license in any location within the City of Edmonton.
9. Sustainable Development – Licensing Branch in consultation with the Civic Events Office, CEMT and other identified stakeholders further explore the need to create a permitting process or bylaw that regulates specific promoted events to assist the City in properly planning, managing and policing of these events.
10. That the City of Edmonton considers a process for seeking cost recovery, utilizing new or existing powers, from person(s) responsible for hosting an illegal event that impacted civic and/or emergency services.
11. That language and best practices developed by the Alberta Emergency Management Agency (AEMA) and Office of Emergency Preparedness (OEP) be utilized for all events that meet the definition of a Mass Gathering.

Reviewed by:

Original is signed
 A/S/Sgt. Grant Jongejan
 Disaster and Emergency Operations Planning Section (DEOPS)

Comments:

Original is signed
 Insp. Brian Lobay
 Field Response Branch

Comments:

Original is signed
 Supt. Ken MacKay
 Operational Support Division

Comments: